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ABSTRACT

Designed for students in vocational education, this introduction to competency-based instruction (1) defines competency-based instruction, (2) defines personalized instruction, (3) describes how competency-based instruction works, (4) reviews how to use learning strategies, (5) discusses how to use behavioral objectives, and (6) examines who is responsible for learning. A sample student agreement is included. (LPA)

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WHAT
HOW
WHO
OF
COMPETENCY-BASED
PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTION

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What is competency-based instruction?

The terms "competency-based" and "performance-based" are used interchangeably. Both terms describe a curriculum or course of study that identifies what the student must "do" to successfully function in a specific occupation. The level of performance is clearly specified and the students verify their learning by way of the competencies.

COMPETENCY-BASED INSTRUCTION:

- Identifies the minimum competencies needed at a job entry level.
- Establishes a standard of acceptable performance.
- Measures the ability of the students to know what they need to know.
- Measures the ability of the students to do what they need to do.
- Measures, as well as is possible, the attitudes and feelings needed for the occupation and the world of work.
- Can be delivered using the traditional, modified personalized, or personalized approach to learning.

What is personalized instruction?

Personalized instruction is an "arrangement" that provides for individual needs and differences. It is flexible and makes instruction more accessible to the individual student. Personalized instruction is based upon the concept that the student learns--not the class. The length of time for the course or program will depend upon the student's demonstrated competence rather than an established time limit.

PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTION:

- Recognizes that students learn different things:
  - at different times.
  - at different rates.
  - by different methods.
- Evaluates previous education or experience and gives students credit for what they already know (advanced standing).
- Allows students to proceed at their own rate within reasonable limits.
- Provides for entering and exiting a program at different times during the year.

- Gives the student more freedom in the classroom and/or laboratory.
- Eliminates "averaging out" in grades because students have a pre-set standard.
- Gives the student more responsibility in decision-making and time management.
- Uses all the methods of teaching but manages them differently.

What personalized instruction is not.

- It is NOT independent study alone.
- It is NOT absolute freedom.
- It is NOT filling out glorified notebooks.
- It is NOT achieved without effort.

What do these terms mean?

WHAT IS A PACKET?	A packet is a way of organizing what you will need to know and do. It serves as a "road map" to guide you in your learning. It includes behavioral objectives, learning strategies, and a self-evaluation guide.
WHAT IS A BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE?	Behavioral objectives tell you what you need to know.
WHAT ARE LEARNING STRATEGIES?	The learning strategies are learning activities or experiences designed to help you meet the objectives.
WHAT IS A SELF-EVALUATION GUIDE?	A self-evaluation guide is a test designed for a self-check to see if you are ready for the mastery test.
WHAT IS A MASTERY TEST?	A test based upon the objectives of the packet which determines if you can go on or not.
WHAT IS A PERFORMANCE COMPETENCY?	A performance test which determines if you are able to perform tasks at an acceptable level of performance.

WHAT IS A TASK?	A task is a specific activity in which you must demonstrate competence in order to successfully function within an occupation.
WHAT IS AN ENTRY TEST?	A test which allows students an opportunity to demonstrate previous knowledge and/or experience.
PASS	The grade given when you receive a 90% or better grade on a mastery test.
RETAKE	The grade given when you receive an 89% or less on a mastery test.

This symbol means to follow the instructor's written instructions or to check with your instructor.

This symbol marks a statement that is to be remembered.

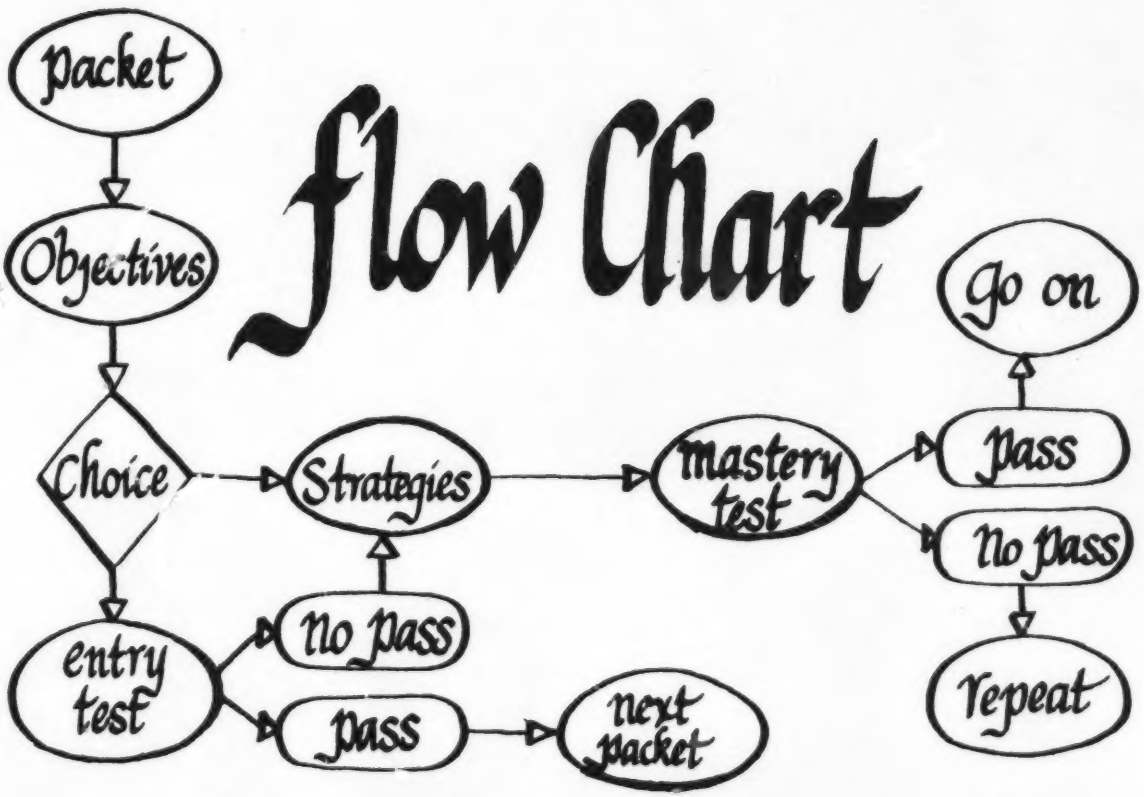
This symbol indicates some words of advice to make things easier for you.

This symbol represents a thought or idea that is used to create interest.

This symbol indicates that a group (at least 3) must be established in order to complete the learning strategy.

How

How does it work?



Flow Chart

How to use behavioral objectives

The purpose of behavioral objectives is to let you know what you need to know or do. Objectives should be clear and to the point as they will be your foundation for learning. When you study a packet, make sure you understand the objectives. Remember, the learning strategies, mastery tests, and competencies are prepared from the objectives.

A good objective is clear and identifies:

- What you are to do in terms of performance.
- Under what circumstances you are to perform.
- How well you should perform.
- How long it should take you to perform.

Upon receiving a packet:

- Read the objectives thoroughly!
- Remember that behavioral objectives:
    - Begin with action verbs.

- Are specific rather than broad.
- Are expressed from the learner's point of view.
- Describe the change desired in the learner.

How to use learning strategies

Learning strategies have been designed to help you meet the objectives. These experiences have been planned and developed to bring about the desired change in the learner. Work through each learning strategy with the specific objective in mind.

Examples of learning strategies are:

- Tapes
- Reports
- Clinicals
- Worksheets
- Filmstrips
- Discussions
- Field Trips
- Demonstrations
- Guest Speakers
- Information Sheets

How to use the self evaluation guide

This is a test designed to determine if you are ready for the mastery test. You should take it as a "test" and then check your answers with the instructor.

You are not penalized for taking a mastery test and not passing, but it does cost you:

time

USE THE SELF-EVALUATION GUIDE WISELY!

How your instructor will help you

The instructor plays a vital role in your learning. Since the objectives are made clear, the instructor's role becomes more one of a coach rather than someone to be "out-psyched", or "out-guessed". The instructor is a resource person who will help you in your learning in the following ways:

- Explain "problem areas" of the packet.
- Direct you to resources.
- Encourage your progress.
- Lead discussion groups.
- Provide clinical supervision.
- Evaluate your progress.
- Guide you in your learning.

Who's

Who is responsible for learning?

How a person learns varys from individual to individual. However, each person must assume the responsibility for his/her own learning. The instructor can and should be a great help in the learning process, but the student must do the learning.

Someone has aptly said:

WE LEARN ONLY WHAT WE WANT TO LEARN.
(THAT'S MOTIVATION)

WE LEARN IN RELATION TO WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW.
(THAT'S EXPERIENCE)

AND WE LEARN BY DOING!
(THAT'S SKILL)

STUDENT AGREEMENT

As a student in the Anoka-Hennepin Area Vocational-Technical Institute's Practical Nursing Program, I do hereby agree to:

- Accept responsibility for my own learning.
- Pace myself to stay within the guidelines of the program by:
    1. Taking and successfully passing a minimum of one (1) test per course per week.
    2. Finishing the requirements for graduation in a maximum of one (1) calendar year.
- Complete competencies required for graduation.
- Attend classes and clinicals.

I also realize that it is my responsibility to establish goals and to work towards them.

FURTHERMORE, I understand that my progress will be periodically evaluated.

_____ Witness

_____ Student's Signature

_____ Date